

What is claimed is:

1. A method for providing an electronic information service in a computer system connected to a network, the method comprising:

    creating a first information object comprising a partial area of a virtual pixel area into which a plurality of users can write information and from which the plurality of users can read information;

    transmitting the first information object via the network to a first user included in the plurality of the users;

    receiving a second information object from the first user corresponding to at least part of the partial area of the virtual pixel area; and

    updating the virtual pixel area utilizing the second information object.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the virtual pixel area includes a position-coding pattern.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein creating the first information object comprises including a position-coding pattern in the first information object.

4. The method of claim 1, further comprising receiving a request from the first user for the partial area of the virtual pixel area.

5. The method of claim 1, further comprising receiving a request from the first user for the partial area of the virtual pixel area, and wherein creating the first information object comprising the partial area of the virtual pixel area comprises creating the first information object in response to the request from the first user.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein the virtual pixel area includes a background image.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein creating the first information object comprises including a background image in the first information object.

8. The method of claim 1, wherein the virtual pixel area comprises a plurality of graphical files.

9. The method of claim 1, wherein creating the first information object comprises including an information image in the first information object.

10. The method of claim 1, further comprising selecting an information image based on user parameters specific to the first user, and wherein creating the first information object comprises including the information image in the first information object.

11. The method of claim 1, wherein creating the first information object comprises including a banner ad in the first information object.

12. The method of claim 1, wherein creating the first information object comprises including a banner ad targeted to the first user in the first information object.

13. The method of claim 1, further comprising notifying a second user when the virtual pixel area has been updated.

14. The method of claim 1, further comprising notifying a second user if a portion of the virtual pixel area specified by the second user is updated as a result of updating the virtual pixel area utilizing the second information object.

15. A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions for performing the method of claim 1.

16. A computer system adapted to perform the method of claim 1.

17. A method for providing an online graphical message service, the method comprising:

receiving from a first user a request for at least a portion of a graphical image;

transmitting the portion of the graphical image over a computer network to the first user;

receiving over the computer network a modification of the graphical image from the first user;

updating the graphical image to include the modification; and

making the updated graphical image available for viewing and modification by a second user.

18. The method of claim 17, further comprising transmitting the modification to a second user who has previously been provided with a portion of the graphical image affected by the modification.

19. The method of claim 17, further comprising specifying a position-coding pattern detectable by an optical sensor for identifying locations on the portion of the graphical image.

20. The method of claim 17, wherein receiving over the computer network the modification of the graphical image from the first user comprises receiving a set of locations determined with respect to a position-coding pattern having a known relationship to the portion of the graphical image.

21. The method of claim 17, wherein a plurality of graphical files represent sections of the graphical image.

22. The method of claim 17, further comprising transmitting a banner ad to the first user.

23. The method of claim 17, further comprising transmitting to the first user a banner ad whose content is targeted to the first user.

24. A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions for performing the method of claim 17.

25. A computer system adapted to perform the method of claim 17.

26. A method for providing an electronic information service in a computer system connected to a network, the method comprising:

receiving a message from a user;

receiving from the user an indication of a position for the message on a virtual area having a matrix of pixels;

placing the message in the position on the virtual area; and

making at least portions of the virtual area available for viewing and modification by a second user.

27. The method of claim 26, further comprising removing the message after a certain period of time.

28. A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions for performing the method of claim 26.

29. A computer system adapted to perform the method of claim 26.

30. A method for participating in an online graphical message service, the method comprising:

    sending a request over a computer network to a computer server for at least a portion of a graphical image that is available for modification and viewing by a plurality of users;

    receiving the portion of the graphical image over the computer network;

    displaying the portion of the graphical image to a first user included in the plurality of users;

    receiving a modification of the portion of the graphical image from the first user; and

    sending the modification over the computer network to the computer server.

31. The method of claim 30, wherein displaying the portion of the graphical image to the first user comprises displaying the portion of the graphical image on a computer monitor.

32. The method of claim 30, wherein displaying the portion of the graphical image to the first user comprises printing the portion of the graphical image with a printer.

33. The method of claim 30, wherein displaying the portion of the graphical image to the first user comprises displaying the portion of the graphical image together with a position-coding pattern, detectable by an optical sensor, in a known relationship to the portion of the graphical image.

34. The method of claim 30, wherein displaying the portion of the graphical image to the first user comprises displaying the portion of the graphical image together with a position-coding pattern, detectable by an optical sensor, in a known relationship to the portion of the graphical image; and receiving the modification of the portion of the graphical image from the first user comprises receiving a set of coordinates generated as a result of the first user moving an optical sensor over the position-coding pattern.

35. A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions for performing the method of claim 30.

36. A computer system adapted to perform the method of claim 30.